



Senior Wellness Testing For Your Dog and Cat

As most pet owners are already aware, dogs and cats age faster than humans. By the time a dog or cat turns 7 years old, they are equivalent to a 45-50 year old human. This is the age at which many degenerative disease processes begin. Aging of the vital organs such as the liver, kidneys, and heart, and diseases such as diabetes, thyroid disease, dental disease and Cushing's disease are a few of the more common problems we see in older pets.

By offering a collection of blood tests and a urinalysis at your pet's annual exam, your veterinarian can screen for some of these diseases in an effort to catch the problem **early** in the course of disease, often **before** your pet develops symptoms of illness. This will give your veterinarian the best possible chance of treating your pet's illness successfully. While many age related illnesses may not be cured, they can often be successfully managed, allowing for improved quality of life and increased life span.

The tests found in a Senior Wellness Panel include:

CBC	An evaluation of red blood cells (anemia), white blood cells and platelets
Chemistry electrolytes	Liver enzymes, kidney enzymes, blood glucose (sugar), calcium,
T4	A screening for hyperthyroidism (high thyroid level) in cats and hypothyroidism (low thyroid level) in dogs
Urinalysis	Evaluation for signs of liver disease, kidney disease and diabetes

An annual combination heartworm, lyme and ehrlichia test is recommended for all dogs. A fecal analysis for intestinal parasites is recommended for all dogs and cats annually.

Please discuss these tests with your veterinarian and whether they are appropriate for your pet.